2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

vomit by tickling the back of my throat with a hen's feather, while I am standing under the fall with the water coming down on my head. The blood of him you have killed is in the waterfall. May it not come! May it all go out of the body! You vomit because it is there in the body. May it go out! Then a medicine is cooked and the legs of the slayer and his relatives are scalded with it. It is the medicine of twins: the twin medicine and the spearing medicine are one because they are a rejection of the blood. When people's legs have been splashed then we all shave; that is to drive away him whom we have killed. 783

But even after such treatment the kin of the slayer and the slain fear to eat together. 'We remain enemies. If we eat with them it makes us thin.' 783 602

Those who drink protective medicines are the agnatic kin of the slayer and the slain, their mothers' kin (*abipwa*) and their wives, but not their affines. 'Those who must be treated are wives, and blood relatives but not affines. Affines are of different blood, but wives are of your flesh.'

The spearing ritual is not a joint ritual in which a large group of kin participate; married men, even brothers, make their own arrangements for taking protective medicine. 783

We do not meet together with all our relatives, the descendants of one man, no, it is not like the twin ritual. We drink it each man with his wives and children in his house. If I have a married brother he also goes to a doctor to ask for medicines for himself. He seeks his own doctor, not the one to whom I went. We drink separately, we do not meet together when we drink.

Only if a daughter had been given in compensation for a murder (as sometimes happened) and later he who married her took marriage cattle to her father to establish kinship, then, our informants said, the two parties should drink the 'medicine of spearing' (*unkota gwa lukuge*) together. 783 682

(b) Rotting the ropes

A man who has been bound with ropes (*ingoje*), or has committed suicide by hanging,[1] or raided cattle and tethered them, is also 753 681

[1] What the incidence of suicide is among the Nyakyusa we do not know. The Rev. Mercusky, one of the first Europeans to live in the area, speaks of it being 'not uncommon'. We recorded two cases: one of a man whose wife and children had died; the other a woman forced to leave her lover and marry against her will. X, a Christian whom we knew well, swore to his pagan elder brother that he would commit suicide if his brother insisted on the pagan practice of performing an autopsy on the body of their dead sister. [762]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya

SELECT RECORDS

I. REPORTS OF PARTICULAR FUNERALS

(a) *Farewell to Mwamulenga III,*[1] *son of Mwegama (Selya)*

Record of G. W. 10/3/37

764 Mwamulenga III hanged himself seventeen days ago, after the
[762] death of one of his wives and his only child. This ritual was held at his own house in Katumba but he was buried at the place where his father, Mwegama, had lived, and the mourning was carried out in the hills by Mwakapesa, the head of the family, who has moved there. The litter was at Mwakapesa's and was taken out about a week ago.

Mwaikambo and I arrived about 10 a.m. with Sikatula (wife of Gwamungonde), who is a cross-cousin (*untani*) of the family. The women were gathered inside the house wailing dirges—words were clearly audible but not, to me, distinguishable: one woman was the leader. There was more wailing than singing. The dirge was punctuated by slow handclaps. Mpogo, the eldest full brother of the dead man, and the heir, told me: 'It is the custom to wail just before the ritual, like this.'

764 Food was brought out about 11 a.m. The women had come close to
515 talk to me; when food came out the men told them to go away. I asked why. 'We wash constantly, but women only wash a little, also they look after children and their bark-cloth belts are dirty. When they cook they wash, but for eating they wash little.'

764 I asked who would perform the ritual.

Mpogo: 'Kalukwa (the widow) will perform the ritual, also each of his brothers and half-brothers will select one or two children to do it too. The rest of our children just look on, for we ourselves are not yet dead.'

Kana Nhamba: 'It is our custom to leave some people over, not to perform it on all.'

Later I asked why Bapala (Kana Lwesi) did the ritual and not Kana Ipalu whose relationship to the dead man was exactly the same. 'We leave some out, they will do it at some other later death.' Actually thirteen people performed it. 'Mwamaloba (son of Mwegama II) will not do the ritual when he returns—it does not matter; but if he'd been a son of the dead man then he would do so. The wives of the dead man's brothers never do the ritual. The ritual for Lukosa (dead wife of

[1] cf. Genealogy on p. 973.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

765 837 the number of cattle has increased so greatly since European administration commenced, that there are many who can pay the fine imposed; or again, that since civilized government will not permit the fighting that used to take place, the emotion generated has to find other outlets.

765 As parties from a distance come to the mourning, they go first to the "owner" of the dead, and offer their sympathies. In return they are given a long account of the progress of the disease, and of the measures that were taken by relatives to prevent death. A man approaching a widow, will sit at a distance of about a yard to offer his condolences, but a woman throws her arms around the neck of the bereaved.

762 The Konde do not attach the same value to life as we do, and suicide is not uncommon. I have known of suicide due to small money troubles, loss of a law-suit, continued poverty, prolonged illness, leprosy, quarrels at home, and finally to disappointment in love; this last, I am told, only on the part of the man; a woman disappointed in love does not commit suicide. For people who die by their own act, there is less mourning than for an ordinary death, and the parting words at the graveside are not the same; "since it was by your own desire that you went." The spirits require an explanation from every one who comes to them in this way; but any answer seems to satisfy them. Ordinarily the new-comers are received with the words, "Come and rest." This information comes from persons who "died" and returned, though a more common belief is that the dead do not return.